

Old West Side Historic District
Reconnaissance Level Re-Survey
Ann Arbor, Washtenaw County

June, 2011

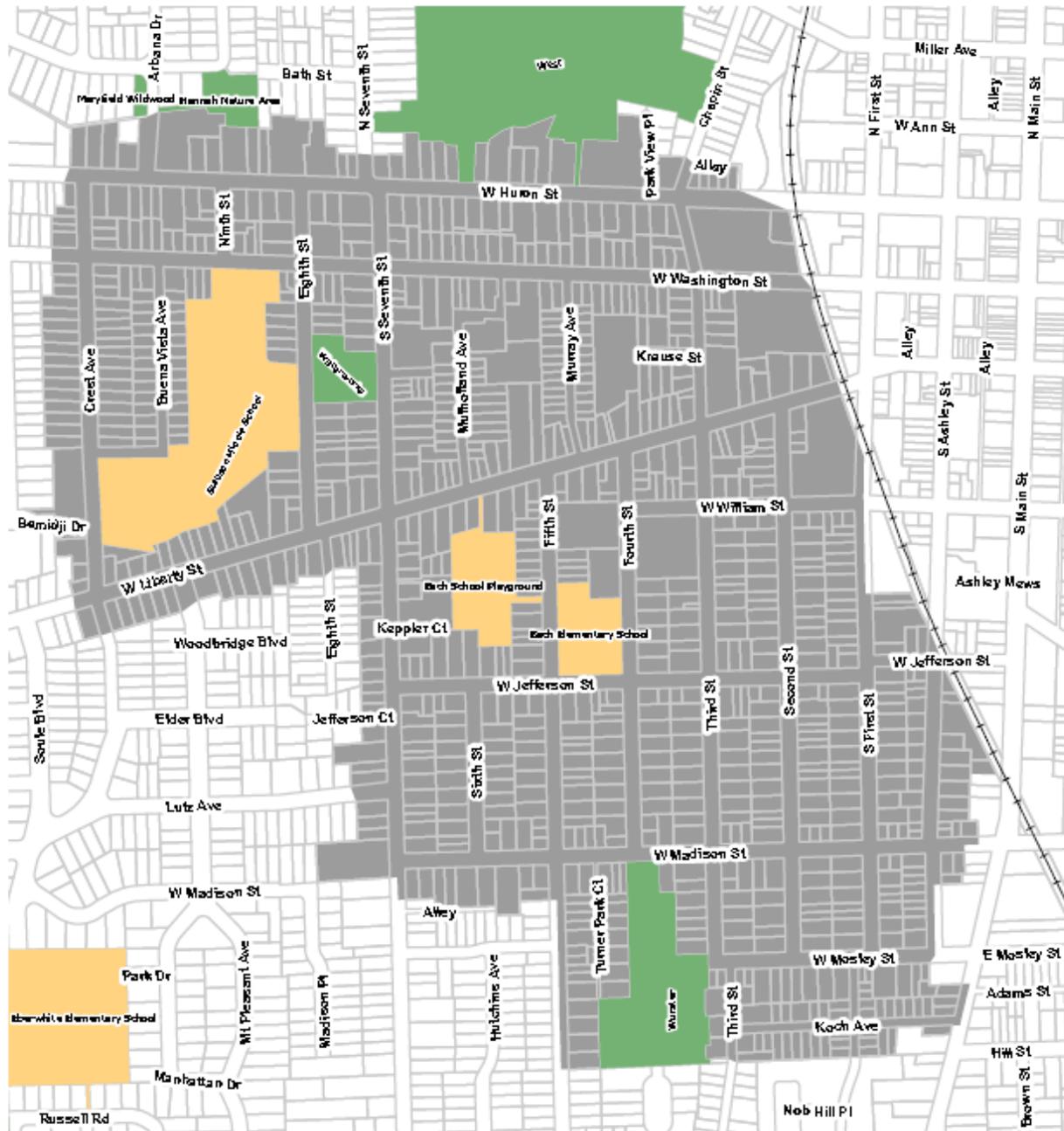
City of Ann Arbor
Historic District Commission
100 N Fifth Avenue
Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

When the City of Ann Arbor designated the Old West Side Historic District in 1978, survey and designation techniques were not as developed as they are today. Therefore, a list of contributing and non-contributing properties in the district was never developed. The purpose of this reconnaissance-level survey is solely to determine which resources contribute to the character of the historic district.

The entire survey area is within a larger district that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Old West Side Historic District. The nomination was completed and the district listed in 1972, with a revision prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office in 1991. The period of significance in the revised nomination is 1840-1941. Contributing and non-contributing properties were not identified by address in the revised nomination. Because the history of the district is well documented both in the national register nomination and in the original study committee report, no further historic research was conducted for this survey. Each property was photographed, and a list of potentially non-contributing properties was developed from the field work. These properties were researched to verify the date of construction and the history where necessary. Properties constructed after 1941 or that have lost their architectural integrity have been determined as non-contributing. Additional research on dates of construction for contributing structures was performed in May and June of 2011, based on Polk City Directories. This information is reflected on the survey sheets.

Ann Arbor City Historic District Map



0 250 500 1,000 Feet

Prepared By: City of Ann Arbor, Community Services, GIS; Assessor's Office maintains parcel data.

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Old West Side

Map Printed: May 23, 2008

Figure 1 - Survey Area shown on local historic district map

PROJECT OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

When the City of Ann Arbor designated the Old West Side Historic District in 1978, preservation survey and designation techniques were not as developed as they are today. Therefore, a list of contributing and non-contributing properties in the district was never developed. The purpose of this reconnaissance-level survey is solely to determine which resources contribute to the character of the locally designated historic district.

As part of the City of Ann Arbor's efforts through the Ann Arbor Discovering Downtown (A2D2) initiative, Chapter 103, Historic Preservation, of the Ann Arbor City Code, was updated in 2007 to bring it into compliance with state-enabling law. This requires the designation of contributing and non-contributing resources in newly designated historic districts. Another part of the A2D2 effort was to identify non-contributing properties within the A2D2 study area, a portion of which overlapped the Old West Side Historic District. The need for an updated survey of the Old West Side was identified through these efforts. After consultation with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), it was determined that a re-survey to identify non-contributing resources was the best approach. Once the survey results are adopted by the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission, the Commission can use the survey for evaluating proposed work in the district.

The survey was undertaken during a two-year period beginning in January, 2008. Field work, which included photographing and taking notes about the properties in the survey area, was completed primarily in April and May, 2008. The project was placed on hold until January, 2009, when the data was entered into the database, survey sheets were created, necessary research was conducted, and this report was prepared. The initial survey work concluded in January, 2010. Additional research on construction dates was undertaken in May and June of 2011.

Nine-hundred-and-fifty-eight properties were surveyed. The entire survey area is within a larger district that is listed in the National Register of Historic Places as the Old West Side Historic District. The nomination was completed in 1972, with a revision prepared by the State Historic Preservation Office in 1991. The period of significance in the revised nomination is 1840-1941, and because of the substantial documentation in the nomination, the same period of significance is used for this report.

Because the history of the district is well documented both in the national register nomination and in the original study committee report, no further historic research on the entire district was conducted for this survey. The text from the nomination was substantially excerpted for the descriptive and historical overviews of this report.

Each property was photographed, and a list of potentially non-contributing properties was developed from the field work. These were researched to verify the date of construction and the history where necessary. Using the definitions for "contributing" and "non-contributing" from the national register, properties constructed or substantially altered after 1941, or that have lost their architectural integrity through alterations, have been determined as non-contributing. A total of seventy-eight

properties, less than one percent, have been identified as non-contributing. These are listed in Appendix A of this report.

The survey area encompasses approximately thirty-three blocks located west of downtown Ann Arbor. The local historic district is roughly bounded by the railroad right-of-way on the east, Huron Street on the north, Crest and Seventh on the west, and Koch on the south. The district contains 958 parcels.

Survey data was entered into a database which was then used to generate survey sheets. Photos were electronically placed on the survey sheets. The survey sheets contain only basic information - the address, date constructed, building materials, and the photo file name. Historic information was entered where readily available, or when further explanation was required for the non-contributing buildings. Although outbuildings and their materials were noted and recorded, they were not counted as resources or evaluated for their contributing or non-contributing status as a part of this survey.

Historic contexts or themes are also not included as part of this survey because they are well documented in the national register nomination and earlier surveys and do not need to be reiterated here.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON DATES

Two sources were used for most of the construction dates on the survey sheets: the City Assessor's Property Database, and Polk City Directories from 1894 to 1941. Where Assessor's construction dates are earlier than shown in Polk, they are noted on the survey sheet. *It should be assumed that any structure with a date of 1894 may be older, and that more research would be necessary to confirm the date of construction.*

DATA LOCATION

Copies of the survey are located at the offices of the Ann Arbor Historic District Commission in the Ann Arbor City Hall.

EVALUATION RESULTS

Attachment A lists the properties that have been determined non-contributing within the Old West Side Historic District. This list does not include vacant land in the district.

For reference, the definitions of contributing and non-contributing from the national register as provided by the SHPO:

A contributing (historic) resource, is one that adds to the historic association, historic architectural quality, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, relates directly to the documented significance, and possesses historic integrity.

A non-contributing (non-historic) resource is one that does not add to the historic architectural qualities or historic association of a district because it was not present during the period of significance, does not relate to the documented significance, or due to alteration, additions, and other changes it no longer possesses historic integrity.

DESCRIPTIVE OVERVIEW

NOTE: This descriptive overview has been excerpted from the Old West Side Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, written by Robert O. Christensen, May, 1991.

The Old West Side Historic District is a large historic residential area with pockets of industrial development located to the west and southwest of Ann Arbor's central business district. The district primarily contains single-family houses dating from the 1830s and 40s to the 1920s and 30s.

The district's topography is hilly, with the lowest areas being generally to the northeast and the highest to the west, southwest, and south. The two branches of Allen's Creek, both enclosed and in underground pipes in the early twentieth century, form shallow valleys in the district's northerly section. The district's most pronounced hill is located in the area generally bounded by West Madison, South Main and Fifth streets. Third Street south of Mosley runs steeply uphill to the hill crest just south of Koch.

Most of the streets run in an east-west or north-south direction, reflecting section lines and the boundaries of the large landholdings of the days before the area's development that generally paralleled them. The primary exceptions are South Main and West Huron and Liberty streets, which pass by or through the district on a slant as they radiate out from the center of town toward neighboring towns. The district's street pattern was established from the 1840s to the 1920s (a few streets were platted later). Large old maples and other deciduous trees, including a few surviving elms, line most of the Old West Side's streets and give the area a shady, quiet ambience despite its closeness to downtown Ann Arbor and to major city streets. One larger city park in the district, Wurster Park occupies the highland ground in the middle of the block west of Third and south of West Madison. It has no historic, man-made features.

The district's building stock is comprised of houses plus a small number of commercial and industrial buildings, two schools, and three churches. The houses are generally modest in scale, except for some larger dwellings along South Main and West Liberty, Washington, and Huron streets and a thin scattering of them on the north-south streets between West Huron and Madison. Almost all were built as single-family dwellings. A few brick and cement block houses are present, but the great majority are of frame construction. The Old West Side's housing is for the most part vernacular.

Although examples of various other vernacular house forms are present, by far the most prevalent house form seen in the early-settled part of the district north of West Madison is the one-and-one-half or two-story, gable-front form. Some Greek Revival

examples and a larger number of later nineteenth-century ones displaying a few Eastlake touches in the treatment of the gable or front porch or patterned shingling in the front gable are present. A great many of the nineteenth-century examples are unadorned, clapboarded structures that display no decorative styling. Early twentieth-century gable-front houses built between about 1900 and 1930 – by far the most common – generally display Colonial features such as cornice returns and a Tuscan-column front porch or Arts-and-Crafts-inspired plain board bargeboarding and exposed rafter ends.

Front- and side-gable bungalows and side-gable bungalow-style houses constitute the district's next most-common house forms. The bungalow-style houses have front verandahs set beneath the main roof slope and large shed dormers accommodating second stories project from their high roofs. Vernacular five-bay and three-bay, center-entrance, one-and-one-half- and two-story, frame houses are also present, as are a small number of nineteenth-century half-basilica dwellings. Among more high style houses, two- and two-and-one-half-story, cross-gable-and-hip-roof, late nineteenth-century houses with Eastlake, Queen Anne, and Colonial detailing appear in small numbers, as do two-story, hip-roof, symmetrical-front Italianate houses and early twentieth-century foursquares.

The streets in the district's southwest corner south of West Madison were largely built up in the 1920s and 30s. The housing stock in this area consists of modest Dutch Colonials, front- and side-gable bungalows, Cape Cod houses, and brick and frame Tudor and English cottage homes set on small lots.

The district's historic industrial buildings date from the late 1860s to the 1930s. These are located in two areas – near the Ann Arbor Railroad line and on Fourth south of West William. Timber-frame, brick-wall, nineteenth-century factory buildings are present. The largest of these structures are the late nineteenth-century, brick Keck/Michigan Furniture Company building located on Fourth Street at West William and the five-story, reinforced concrete King-Seeley Corporation building on South Ashley north of West William. Other historic industrial-type buildings in the district include the 1904, former Ann Arbor Water Works warehouse (rehabilitated into housing in the early 1980s) at 201 Mulholland, and the brick and reinforced concrete Washtenaw County Road Commission headquarters at 415 West Washington, constructed between 1916 and the 1930s.

The small number of historic commercial buildings are located in the part of the district between West Liberty and Madison streets. They are primarily small, one-story store buildings, some of them free-standing and others attached to houses.

Other buildings which contribute to the district's historic significance include three church buildings and the Bach and Slauson Schools. The 1896, red brick, cross-gable, Gothic, former First German Methodist Church stands at the northeast corner of West Jefferson and Fourth. The two other churches are the early 1920s, plain brick, corner-towered former First Free Methodist Church at 420 West Huron and St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church, a 1929, Neo-Gothic, brick structure at the northeast corner of West Liberty and Third. The late 1910s, Neo-Tudor Philip Bach School, with more modern additions, stands on the north side of West Jefferson

between Fourth and Fifth, while the mildly Art Deco Herbert M. Slauson Junior High School, completed about 1937, is located on the south side of Washington east of Ninth.

The district contains relatively few non-contributing buildings. The most highly visible non-contributing buildings are large modern apartment buildings constructed for the most part in the 1960s that are found in scattered locations along South Ashley and South Main; in the 400 blocks of South First, Second, and Third; and along West Huron, Madison, and Mosley. Some modern commercial buildings are found on South Main, South Ashley, and West Huron. The non-contributing buildings also include a small number of older houses that have lost most of their historic character plus some modern ranch and newer infill housing.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

NOTE: This historical overview has been excerpted from the Old West Side Historic District, National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, written by Robert O. Christensen, May, 1991.

The Old West Side neighborhood was the center of Ann Arbor's large German community through the nineteenth early twentieth centuries, and contains homes and other buildings that have important associations with that community. The district's well preserved building stock also strongly reflects the social diversity of the neighborhood, which housed in close conjunction prosperous, self-made businessmen and working-class families of modest means, together with various industrial establishments. The district also contains the plants of various of the city's leading nineteenth- and early twentieth-century industries. Finally, the Old West Side contains an impressive concentration of well preserved worker housing dating primarily from the 1880s to the 1920s, together with a small number of larger and more high style Late Victorian homes.

What is now the Old West Side, in the period from the city's founding in the late 1820s until the 1880s, had only a thin scattering of buildings. The principal streets which edge or pass through the area – West Huron, West Liberty, and South Main – were established by the 1830s.

Main Street between William and Ann streets has been the principal business street in Ann Arbor since the 1830s and 1840s. As the town grew into a city in the 1850s and 60s, residential development took place in all directions. While the area to the east toward the newly established University of Michigan saw the greatest growth, the northeast section of what is now the Old West Side also saw some residential development beginning probably in the 1840s. William S. Maynard (1802-66), a pioneer hotel- and tavern-keeper and businessman from Massachusetts who settled in Ann Arbor in 1830, platted much of the west side west as far as Seventh Street in the 1846-1861 period. A number of Greek Revival houses, mostly modest frame structures, have survived, especially along West Liberty, South Main, and Second and Third streets. The first second ward public school building was constructed in 1860. It stood on the northwest corner of West Jefferson and Fourth where the late 1910s Bach School currently stands.

Beginning in the 1850s, the near west side acquired a suburban, middle-class character as prosperous merchants, businessmen, and professionals began to settle there. One of the earliest appears to have been attorney John N. Gott, who completed and occupied the ample five-bay, center-entrance, transitional Greek Revival-Italianate house at 709 West Huron in 1861. Another was the wagon builder Christian Walker, who built the brick, cubical Italianate house at 902 West Liberty in the late 1850s. In the next few decades the construction of substantial homes on large lots by additional successful businessmen gave West Huron and West Liberty streets a mildly upscale character that contrasted with the modest houses and modest lots, characteristic of the area as a whole.

The relative sparseness of settlement in the west side and its closeness to downtown Ann Arbor, plus the presence of Allen's Creek running south-southeast to north-northwest along the east edge of the area, fostered industrial development in the west side at an early date. In 1850 Henry Krause established a tannery at the northeast corner of West William and Second streets. He replaced the original frame building with a brick structure with attached engine house in 1868. Part of the plan brick tannery building may survive, with substantial alterations and additions, at 315-17 Second Street.

Another early west side industry included the Western Brewery which was established in 1861 by Peter Brehm and John Reier. Located on the west side of Fourth below West William, the original brewery burned in 1864. The building was quickly rebuilt and sold to Christian Martin and Mathias Fischer in 1880, and in 1881 was producing about 3,000 barrels of beer. The Western Union Brewery became the Michigan Union Brewery by 1908 and apparently remained in business until Prohibition. A new brick brewery building was constructed in 1902 by the Koch Brothers, local contractors who had their yard at 501 South Ashley. The two- to four-story building has survived and retains its blocky brewery form and much of its exterior detailing despite conversion to office use.

The building of the Ann Arbor Railroad spurred substantial new industrial development nearby. The Keck Furniture Company, founded in 1879 by local furniture retailer John Keck and others, and reorganized in the mid-1880s as the Michigan Furniture Company, constructed its factory at 401-05 Fourth, the southeast corner of Fourth and West Williams streets. The three- and four-story plant was evidently built in sections, with the southern part of the four-story building along Fourth constructed between 1888 and 1892, the north part by 1899, and the three-story wing along West William by 1908. The firm produced bedsteads and bedroom sets. The firm continued to produce bedroom furniture (much of it allegedly for Sears) until its failure in 1929, and the plant survives with a two-story, Moderne addition across Fourth constructed by later owners Argus, Inc.

Residential development of the Old West Side took place slowly during the years before 1880. The greatest concentrations of houses built before about 1870 that have survived are found along West Liberty Street and along the 400 blocks of Third and Fourth and the 500 block of Fifth. The great majority of the Old West Side from West Huron south to West Madison was built up between about 1880 and 1930.

Ann Arbor, like much of Washtenaw County, shared in the substantial immigration from Germany – especially Wurttemberg – that began about 1830 and continued in a major stream through the 1840s, 50s, and 60s as Germans fled economic hardships and political oppression.

German settlement tended to focus in the downtown and near west side areas from the first and, in the decades after the Civil War, the near west side became the center of the German community. Residents of the area north of West Madison Street were by 1899 almost exclusively German, with a small number of Irish and Yankees. Within the neighborhood the families of successful businessmen lived side-by-side with those of small tradesmen, shopkeepers, and other workers. Successful German businessmen who lived in the West Side include Peter Brehm, proprietor of the Western Brewery in the 1860s and early 1870s; Mathjias Fischer, co-proprietor of the brewery after 1880; Titus F. Hutzal, of Hutzal & Co. plumbing contractors; John C. Walz Jr., assistant cashier of the State Savings Bank; David F. Allmendinger, founder and superintendent of the Ann Arbor Organ Company; and J. Frederick Schaeberle, a dealer in pianos, organs, and sheet music. The homes of all of them survive -- Brehm's at 326 West Liberty, Fischers's at 717-19 West Jefferson, Hutzal's at 724 West Washington, Walz's at 416 West Jefferson, Allmendinger's at 719 West Washington, and Schaeberle's at 420 West Jefferson.

The heart and soul of this German district was its small trades- and craftsman, shopkeepers, and other workers. A random sampling of listings from the 1899 directory (the first that has a directory by street addresses) suggests that among householders in the district area carpenters were especially numerous, with masons and painters also present in substantial numbers.

The directory entries show a broad range of other occupations represented by the district's late nineteenth-century residents, including carvers and cabinetmakers, steamfitters, pressmen, butchers, tailors, shop clerks, and drivers. A number of residents worked in nearby industries. A few farmers also had their homes in the area. Directory entries indicate that daughters who were living with their parents, along with some wives, often worked as clerks or seamstresses.

The district's housing stock consists primarily of modest, frame, single-family dwellings. West Liberty and Huron and South Main continued to be the leading residence streets in the district, containing many of its largest and most costly houses set among other, modest houses more typical of the area as a whole. The factories, workers' housing, and the homes of managerial personnel and even some of the factory owners stand within a short distance of each other in the Old West Side. Other substantial houses dot the old side streets between West Huron and Madison.

In the years between 1900 and 1930 most of the remaining lots in the older part of the district north of West Madison were built upon. Crest Avenue, which marks part of the district's western boundary, was largely built up in the 1920s. The street acquired some of the district's more substantial Colonials, foursquares, and bungalows. The 1927 city directory indicates that this street houses a number of

prosperous Ann Arbor businessmen, such as LeRoy C. Mursinna, manager of the local S.S. Kresge store (227 Crest), Dominic and Florence Dimattia, proprietors of the Dimattia Beauty Shop (230 Crest), and Fred W. Gross, a partner in Wild & Co., tailors and men's clothing and furnishings (102 Crest).

As the neighborhood developed in the early twentieth century, a small number of neighborhood grocery stores and other small shops grew up to serve the growing population. Most of these, such as the buildings at 431-33 South First and 524-26 Fifth, are houses with small, attached store buildings. One, however, the Jefferson Market constructed between 1916 and 1925 at 609 West Jefferson, is a free-standing, brick building. Another, larger commercial building in the district, built by 1916, is the cement block dairy store structure at 602 South Ashley (corner of West Madison).

The Old West Side is important in architectural terms for its blocks of handsomely preserved modest, uniform-scale, workers' houses dating from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth centuries. The area's uniformly narrow and deep lots resulted in detached single-family houses of similarly narrow and deep form. Front-gable structures – often containing only a few references to current architectural fashions, from Greek Revival and Italianate to Colonial and Arts-and-Crafts (“Craftsman”) – predominate on the numbered streets north of West Madison. Characteristic examples of other nineteenth-century American and Midwestern vernacular house forms such as side-gable, upright-and-wing and gabled-ell, half-basilica, hip-roof cube, and cross-gable-and-hip are also present, but in lesser numbers. Among the great number of early twentieth-century houses, the most common houses, after the front-gable ones, are modest bungalows and bungalow-style two-story homes with exterior walls clad in weatherboarding, shingling, and stuccoing. The district's streets also contain a wide variety of other early twentieth-century houses, including Colonial and Dutch Colonial, foursquare, and Tudor and English cottage houses. Two of the district's houses have been identified as catalog homes. Number 802 South First, a very modest jerkinhead-roof (or clipped-gable) cottage, appears to be an example of The Rodessa, a popular Sears, Roebuck home available from 1919 to 1929. The shingled, jerkinhead-roof English cottage dwelling at 348 Eighth exemplifies The Kenwood, a Montgomery Ward design (advertised in the firm's 1931 catalog) that was similar to dwellings produced by Sears, Aladdin Homes, and Sterling Homes at the same time.

Seemingly the only architectural expression of the solidly German ethnic background of this typically Midwestern American-appearing neighborhood is its brick houses. More than two dozen houses in the district dating from the Civil War era to the turn of the twentieth-century have brick exteriors. This is only a small percentage of the district's housing dating from that period, but a greater percentage than is generally found in the largely clapboard and shingle towns of southern Michigan. The Old West Side's early brick houses exemplify standard house forms such as front-gable, hip-roof cube, and cross-gable-and-hip. Some of these buildings were built by German-born masons such as John Lucas, who constructed his own cross-gable-and-hip-roof, mildly Eastlake home at 502 Sixth in 1882, and John Koch, who built the imposing Queen Anne-style 1888 John Hagen and 1891 Albert Mann houses at 818 and 408 West Liberty, respectively. Many German-born masons, such as

Charles Raab, who lived in an 1880s brick house at 632 South First, resided in the district, but it has not been possible to document which of the brick houses they may have built.

ATTACHMENT A - INDEX LIST OF NON-CONTRIBUTING PROPERTIES

ADDRESS	Year Built
100 ARBANA	1978
550 ASHLEY	c. 1960
511 ASHLEY	c. 1940
611 ASHLEY	1954
630 ASHLEY	1974
216 BUENA VISTA	1953
222 BUENA VISTA	1955
220 BUENA VISTA	1956
229 BUENA VISTA	1970
259 CREST	1950
405 EBERWHITE	1958
637.5 FIFTH	2009
701 FIFTH	1922
719 FIFTH	1995
731 FIFTH	1930
441 FIRST	c. 1960
635 FIRST	1895
448 FIRST	2003
442 FIRST	c. 1960
606-08 FIRST	1965
426 FIRST	c. 1960
1000-04 HURON	c. 1960
704-08 HURON	1955
712 HURON	c. 1960
810 HURON	c. 1960
831 HURON	1950
1117 HURON	c. 1960
600 HURON	1965
914-34 HURON	2007
1015 HURON	c. 1960
1120 HURON	c. 1960
1014 HURON	1947
1100 HURON	c. 1960
1300 HURON	1984
821 JEFFERSON	c. 1965
5 KEPPLER	1954
320 KOCH	c. 1960
375 KOCH	1998
513 KRAUSE	1961
417 LIBERTY	1962
1131 LIBERTY	1996
404 LIBERTY	c. 1960
318 LIBERTY	c. 1970
325 LIBERTY	1938
715-19 MADISON	c. 1960
723 MADISON	1970
801 MADISON	c. 1960
807 MADISON	c. 1960
809 MADISON	1958

703	MADISON	1948
721	MADISON	c. 1960
708	MAIN	c. 1960
405	MOSLEY	c. 1965
220	MOSLEY	1895
207	MOSLEY	c. 1965
213	MOSLEY	c. 1965
418	SECOND	c. 1960
426	SECOND	c. 1960
214	SEVENTH	c. 1960
524	SEVENTH	1960
421	SEVENTH	c. 1960
554-6	SEVENTH	1978
550	SEVENTH	1978
441	SEVENTH	1952
221-53	SEVENTH	c. 1960
405	SEVENTH	1958
417	SEVENTH	1954
439	THIRD	c. 1960
413	THIRD	c. 1960
442	THIRD	c. 1960
613	THIRD	1975
706	THIRD	1947
623	TURNER PARK	1999
619	TURNER PARK	1960
631	TURNER PARK	1998
659	TURNER PARK	1986
517	WASHINGTON	1990
1010	WASHINGTON	2002
400	WASHINGTON	2005